

**REMARKS:**

Claims 1, 4-8 and 11 are presented for examination, with claims 1 and 8 having been amended hereby.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 1, 4-8 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,264,323 ("Chao '323") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,335,025 ("Wang '025").

It is respectfully submitted that applicant does not necessarily concur with the Examiner in the Examiner's analysis of the claims of the present application and the Chao '323 and Wang '025 disclosures.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution of the application, independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended hereby to more particularly point out the features of the invention directed to: (a) in the case of claim 1, the retainer being configured to receive the forward portion of the second bridge without causing the upper and lower clamping plates to separate during insertion of the second bridge into the retainer; and (b) in the case of claim 8, the retainer being configured to receive the forward portion of the first bridge without causing the upper and lower clamping plates to separate during insertion of the first bridge into the retainer.

Applicant respectfully compares this claimed structure to Chao '323, where it appears (see, e.g., Figs. 6 and 7) that due to there being raised ribs 57 at the mouth of the opening 500, insertion of the forward portion of the first bridge 55 would cause the upper clamping plate 53 and lower clamping plate 54 to separate (in particular, see Fig 7, where it appears that first bridge 55 would not be able to pass by raised ribs 57 at the mouth of the opening 500 without causing upper clamping plate 53 and lower clamping plate 54 to separate).

Of course, Wang '025, having no such analogous structure (e.g., having no groove/rib mating structure) does nothing to show or suggest this claimed feature.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 4-8 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chao '323 in view of Wang '025 has been overcome.

Further, it is noted that this Amendment is fully supported by the originally filed application and thus, no new matter has been added. For this reason, the Amendment should be entered.

More particularly, support for the amendments to claim 1 is found in claim 1, as filed; at page 4, line 12 to page 6, line 4; in Figs. 2-7; and throughout the specification.

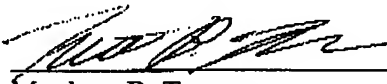
Further, support for the amendments to claim 8 is found in claim 8, as filed; at page 6, line 5 to page 7, line 19; in Figs. 8 and 9; and throughout the specification.

Finally, it is respectfully submitted that the amendments made hereby require no further search by the Examiner since the aspect relating to the insertion of a bridge into a retainer such that the insertion of the bridge into the retainer generates essentially no bending force to either an upper clamping plate or a lower clamping plate until a rib is inserted into the retainer had already been searched for and considered.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,  
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